

Attorney Docket # 3415-11CIP

Serial No. **09/688,482**
Amdt. dated February 3, 2004
Reply to Office Action dated October 3, 2003

Amendments to the Specification:

Please amend the paragraph at page 10, line 1, with the following amended paragraph:

FIG. 9 is a perspective view of multiple totes secured to a grocery box with two multi-section chains; [and]

FIG. 10 is a perspective view of a tote secured to a grocery box on one side with a single multi-section chain and on its opposite side with a hinge[.];

Please add the following new paragraphs at page 10, after line 4:

FIG. 11 is a flowchart of a general method according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

FIGS. 11A, 11C, 11D, and 11E show various possible additional steps to the steps of FIG. 11; and

FIGS. 11B and 11F show specific embodiments of one or more steps in FIG. 11.

Please add the following new paragraphs on page 21, after line 2:

The following paragraphs will describe a general preferred embodiment of a method according to the present invention (with reference to FIG. 11), as well as various specific embodiments and variations.

In one method according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention, as shown in FIG. 11 (with reference to FIGS. 9 and 10), there would be three basic steps: placing an item in a tote 200 (*step 1110*), wherein said tote 200 comprises a cover 205, a main structure 207, and a pair of eyelets on an exterior of the tote 200, said eyelet pair comprising a first eyelet 300 and a second eyelet 302 on the exterior of the main structure 207 where the second eyelet 302 is substantially in proximity to the first eyelet 300; delivering the tote 200 to a delivery destination (*step 1120*); and securing the tote 200 substantially at the delivery destination (*step 1130*) by looping a portion of a securing means 310 through the pair of eyelets (300 and 302) to securely tighten the cover 205 to

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the main structure 207 of the tote 200, wherein the securing means 310 is securely connected to a mounting means substantially at the delivery destination.

As shown in the embodiment of **FIG. 11A**, the method according to FIG. 11 can also include the *step 11XX* (the reference numeral "11XX" is used to indicate that this step may occur before or after the steps in FIG. 11) of holding the securing means 310 inside the storage container 260 when the securing means 310 is not in use, wherein the securing means 310 is securely connected to a storage container 260 mounted in proximity to the delivery destination.

As shown in the embodiment of **FIG. 11B**, when the securing means 310 comprises a plurality of sections 310a,b,c, and a first end 310aa of a first section 310a of the plurality of sections 310a,b,c is securely connected to a mounting means, and a first end 310ca of a third section 310c is securely mounted to a mounting means, *step 1130* of FIG. 11 can comprise the following sub-steps:

Step 1132: looping a first end 310ba of a second section 310b of the plurality of sections 310a,b,c comprising securing means 310 through and around the first and second eyelets 300 and 302 to securely tighten the cover 205 to the main structure 207 of the tote 200;

Step 1134: locking a second end 310cb of the third section 310c to a second end 310bc of the second section 310b with a first lock 321 that may be opened by a customer; and

Step 1136: after completing step 1132, locking the first end 310ba of the second section 310b to a second end 310ab of the first section 310a with a second lock 320 that may be opened by a delivery person.

As shown in the embodiment of **FIG. 11C**, when the method of FIG. 11B is used, the general method of FIG. 11 may further comprise *step 1140* of retrieving, by the customer, the tote 200 by unlocking the first lock and removing the looped section of the securing means 310 from the first and second eyelets.

The embodiment of **FIG. 11D** shows what step 1130 of FIG. 11 may be comprised of, if the tote 200 further comprised another eyelet pair, namely the third and fourth eyelets 344 and 342, respectively, on another side of tote 200, where the third eyelet 344 is on the exterior of the cover 205 of tote 200 and the fourth eyelet 342 is on the main structure 207 of the tote in substantial

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proximity to third eyelet 344. Namely, in that embodiment, step 1130 would comprise the step of looping a second securing means 310 through the third and fourth eyelets 344 and 342, respectively, to securely tighten the cover 205 to the main structure 207 of the tote 200 on the second side (*step 1133*).

As shown in the embodiment of **FIG. 11E**, if the item in tote 200 is a grocery item, the general method of **FIG. 11** may comprise the further *step 1115* of maintaining the grocery item at a desired temperature by either placing a frozen insert in the tote 200 in proximity to the grocery item or by feeding a chilled gas into at least a portion of the tote 200. It should be understood that, although the reference numeral "1115" is used to indicate this step, thereby implying it occurs as part of step 1110 in **FIG. 11**, it is possible for this step to occur at any time, including, for example, at the time of delivery.

A different embodiment is shown in **FIG. 11F**, where the number or size of items to be delivered necessitate that a number of totes be used to secure the items at the delivery destination. In **FIG. 11F**, Step 1110 of **FIG. 11** becomes *step 1110F*, in which the plurality of items are placed in a plurality of totes, each with a similar structure as the tote used in step 1110. After delivery in *step 1120F*, the method of **FIG. 11E** requires that step 1130 be performed for all of the plural totes in *step 1130F* because there are a plurality of totes.